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others besides the first supposed Author, men not unread, nor unlearned in Antiquitie, who admit that for approved story, which the former explode for fiction, and seeing that oftentimes relations heretofore accounted fabulous have been after found to contain in them many foot-steps, and reliques of something true, as what we read in Poets of the Flood, and Giants little beleev'd, till undoubted witnesses taught us, that all was not fain'd; I have therefore determin'd to bestow the telling over ev'n of these reputed Tales; be it for nothing else but in favor of our English Poets, and Rhetoricians, who by thir Art will know, how to use them judiciously." In the light of our recent interest in aviation, Milton, thinking of Bladud, might have added to "foot-steps and reliques," prophecies "of something true."

Though Milton never produced a poem founded on the early history of Britain, is it not possible that he made judicious use of the story of the "British Icarus" in the following passage from *Paradise Lost*, 2. 927-938, which so strongly suggests some of the experiences of our modern aeronauts?

"At last his Sail-broad Vannes
He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoak
Uplifted spurns the ground, thence many a League
As in a cloudy Chair ascending rides
Audacious, but that seat soon failing, meets
A vast vacutie: all unawares
Fluttring his pennons vain plumb down he drops
Ten thousand fadom deep, and to this hour
Down had been falling, had not by ill chance
The strong rebuff of som tumultuous cloud
Instinct with Fire and Nitre hurried him
As many miles aloft."

ALLAN H. GILBERT.

The Cornell University.

BRIEF MENTION

No more important aid to the scientific study of the French language has appeared in recent years than the *Atlas linguistique de la France*,¹ which is now complete, with the exception of the index. Criticism of many details of this monumental work is possible, and attacks on the general plan have not been wanting, but there is no question that this series of maps preserves for us a great mass of invaluable material that was on the point of passing beyond our reach; that it has sensibly modified the methods of etymological study; and that it has given to the accurate recording of the dia-

lects a stimulus, already reflected in the recent works in this domain, which not only assures a more analytic knowledge of the French *patois*, but even gives promise of resulting in the discovery of principles that have fundamental bearing on the nature of linguistic processes. Students of French whose means do not permit them to own the work should at least see that it is at hand in all research libraries.

A book of great interest to Romance workers is Meyer-Lübke's *Etymological Dictionary*, the first instalment of which has just appeared in the *Sammlung Romanischer Elementar- und Handbücher*.¹ The arrangement by the alphabetical order of the Latin etyma, introduced by Körting, is maintained, but the number of titles is substantially diminished (1129 numbers in M-L for A-Biso, against 1425 in K.) by a wise conservatism in positing hypothetical Latin forms. Where there is no positive evidence for such a background and where at the same time the form can be derived by affix from a stem existing in the Romance language in question, the word is classed under the simplex. Non-Latin etyma with more than local reflexes are included, while late learned words are omitted and dialect forms are cited only where they seem to throw additional light on the development. The aim has been to refer to essential bibliography, tho the frequent limitation to the latest or the most important reference is sometimes liable to be misleading. The discussion is exceedingly compact (less than a page on *AMBITARE* and *AMBULARE* as against some five pages in K.), but is incisive and illuminating. There is no hesitation in assuming a positive attitude, but the decision is usually backed up by a brief phrase giving its essential basis. Etymologies accounted clearly abortive are passed over in silence—perhaps a few that merit at least mention sharing this fate with less worthy companions. The section of the dictionary now before us suffices to demonstrate that Professor Meyer-Lübke brings to the difficult task he has undertaken the skilled touch of an experienced scholar and writer, and it is with gratification that we greet a work that will put within our reach his great store of etymological knowledge.

¹ Par J. Gilliéron et E. Edmond. 35 fascicules in-folio de 50 cartes chacun. Paris, Champion. 875 fr.

¹ *Romanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*. Lieferung 1. Heidelberg, Winter, 1911. 8vo., xxii-80 pp. Mk. 2. The complete work will comprise about 900 pages.